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**Transportation Committee**

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**HB 2965**

**Brief Description:** Modifying the vehicle licensing fee on commercial trailers for commercial vehicle operator training purposes and local roads maintenance.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hasegawa, Chase and Williams.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Implements an additional \$36 registration fee for commercial trailers that are used in conjunction with vehicles licensed for gross vehicle weight of 26,000 pounds or more.
- Changes commercial trailer permanent registrations to an annual registration.
- Establishes the Commercial Vehicle Operator Account.
- Provides funding for commercial vehicle operator training at community and technical colleges.
- Establishes a grant program for local road maintenance and local freight mobility grants.

**Hearing Date:** 1/30/06

**Staff:** Jerry Long (786-7306).

**Background:**

In Washington State there are two classes of commercial trailers. The first commercial class are trailers that are used in a business and the tow vehicle and trailer do not exceed 40,000 pounds. The license fee on these trailers is \$36. The second class of trailers are trailers pulled by commercial vehicles with a declared gross weight of 42,000 pounds or more. These trailers may choose to pay a one time fee of \$36 for a permanent trailer plate. Upon the sale, permanent removal from the state, or other disposition of a trailering unit bearing a permanent license plate, the registered owner is required to return the license plate and registration certificate to the Department of Licensing.

The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges oversees the community and technical colleges. One of the programs offered at some of the colleges is training on commercial vehicle operation. Currently there are seven community and technical college districts that have state-supported commercial truck operator programs.

**Summary of Bill:**

Commercial trailers that are used in conjunction with vehicles licensed for 26,000 pounds or more will pay an additional license fee of \$36 at the time of original and renewal registration beginning on April 1, 2007. The commercial trailers used in conjunction with vehicles licensed for under 26,000 pounds will remain at \$36 license fee. The permanent plate trailers are moved from a one time registration to an annual registration beginning on July 1, 2006.

Twenty percent of the revenue will be deposited into a newly created account entitled the Commercial Vehicle Operator Account which will receive 100 percent of its investment earnings. Money in the account can only be spent after appropriation. The State Board of Community and Technical Colleges will distribute the funds to community and technical colleges each fiscal year. The distribution will be based on the number of students enrolled in their commercial operator training program as a percentage of the total state commercial operator enrollments. The Board will prepare and submit a report on the training programs to the legislature for each fiscal year by September 1st of that year.

The remainder of the revenue will be deposited in the Motor Vehicle Fund and will be used solely for local government road maintenance and local freight mobility grants. The Department of Transportation will develop, implement, and administer the grant program. The Speaker of the House will appoint two representatives, one from each caucus and the President of the Senate will appoint two senators, one from each caucus in the Senate, and the Governor will appoint a person to represent cities and a person to represent counties to work with the Department of Transportation to develop the criteria for the grant program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.